

Name:

Synthesis Essay

Write an essay on the following prompt. Don't forget to plan your answer before you begin, and staple this sheet to your completed multi-paragraph essay when you hand it in. Your finished essay will be AT LEAST 300 words. It will be marked according to the Synthesis Essay Marking Guide.

1. "The White Knight" by Eric Nichol, "The Lady or the Tiger" by Frank Stockton, and "The Rocking Horse Winner" by D.H. Laurence all use the "fairy tale/legend" format to deliver a thematic message. However, the stories differ significantly in diction and style. Choose at least TWO of the stories and explain how and why the fable, legend, or fairy tale styles of the stories contribute to the messages they are trying to get across. You must discuss and quote from at least two of the texts in your answer.

Hints for Synthesis

- Before you write the synthesis section on the provincial exam, you will answer two multiple choice questions that refer to both texts (just like English 10!) Pay attention to these, because they give you clues as to what is expected from your synthesis response.
- Your synthesis response should be at least 300 words. You need this to adequately explore both texts and then bring them together.
- The synthesis essay needs to be multi-paragraph. Four or five paragraphs are expected. If you write without paragraphing, you will probably reduce your mark by a full point.
- Take a moment or two to sketch out your ideas before you begin. According to experts, the average student who takes a moment to plan spends less than a minute to do so, but can expect significantly higher achievement. This is why you should bring a pencil to an electronic exam. Remember that you are not allowed to take any notes away with you when you leave.
- There are two approaches to synthesis:
 - Both texts together, all the way. This is where you find three points you want to talk about, and discuss how both texts reflect these points. A sample structure for an essay comparing two characters might be:
 - Paragraph 1: Mention the title (usually in quotation marks) and the authors of both pieces, and the names of both characters. Hint at what your main point is going to be. (2 sentences).
 - Paragraph 2: Take a trait, such as "they are both honest" and prove, with support from the text, how the characters from each text show honesty.
 - Paragraph 3: Take another trait and discuss how each of the characters do or do not show it.
 - Paragraph 4: Briefly go through less important similarities and differences.

- Paragraph 5: Synthesize and evaluate. Most questions will ask you to decide which text is more effective, shows more of something, or whatever. This is your chance to show that you are thinking. Do not skimp on this section.
- One at a time. This is where you discuss first one, then the other, then bring it together. A sample structure comparing two characters might be:
 - Paragraph 1: Mention the title (usually in quotation marks) and the authors of both pieces, and the names of both characters. Hint at what Explain what your main point is going to be.
 - Paragraph 2: Describe the character from one of the texts, listing traits, and giving evidence to support your answer.
 - Paragraph 3: Describe the character from the other text, listing traits, and giving evidence to support your answer.
 - Paragraph 4: **Synthesize** your answer. Give your evaluation. This is the most important section, so it should be the largest paragraph.
 - Paragraph 5: If you need to, summarize your answer again.

What I'm looking for in a synthesis essay:

- You are making a point that gives you something to focus on, and applies to **both** stories.
- Both** texts are discussed, and some attempt is made to compare and/or contrast them.
- Your answer shows that you read and understand the texts at an inferential level.
- Your argument explains your thinking to the reader.
- Your essay is well written. You have effective paragraphing and transitions, and have used appropriate vocabulary.
- If you hand this in by the end of this class, this will be considered an impromptu essay, so spelling and punctuation are less important. However, you need to avoid repeated errors that show that you do not have a full grasp of basic skills.
- If you hand this in late (after Tuesday April 24th) this will be marked as a polished, planned essay.

How these papers are marked on provincial exams.

- Papers that fail are often too brief to accomplish the task, do not answer the question, do not show synthesis, only deal with one text, do not offer support, or are too disorganized to make sense. Of course, a severe misunderstanding of the text or the question, or papers that have too many mechanical errors to make sense, also fail. If you discuss each text separately, and do not bring them together, you are not showing synthesis.
- Mid-level papers tend to be literal and superficial, but at least some synthesis is attempted. The text and question are understood and generally correct. The essay may rely heavily on paraphrasing or retelling, and the support is therefore rather general. Errors may be noticeable, but the marker can still understand your meaning.
- High level papers show inference, and the synthesis is “sophisticated” and uses specific references to both texts. The writing style is effective and demonstrates skillful control of language. It doesn’t need to be perfect, but the writer knows what he or she is doing!

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SCORING GUIDE FOR ANALYSIS OF SYNTHESIS

This is a first-draft response and should be assessed as such. The response is assessed holistically.

<p>6 The six essay is superior</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates an insightful understanding of both texts. <input type="checkbox"/> The essay shows a sophisticated approach to synthesis. <input type="checkbox"/> Includes pertinent references that are well-integrated. <input type="checkbox"/> The writing style is effective and demonstrates skillful control of language. <input type="checkbox"/> Although it shows clarity and precision, the essay need not be error-free.
<p>5 The five essay is proficient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates a clear understanding of both texts at an interpretive level. <input type="checkbox"/> The essay clearly synthesizes the concepts within the texts. <input type="checkbox"/> References may be explicit or implicit and convincingly support the analysis. <input type="checkbox"/> The writing is well organized and reflects a strong command of the conventions of language. <input type="checkbox"/> Errors may be present, but are not distracting.
<p>4 The four essay is competent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding of the texts tends to be literal and superficial. <input type="checkbox"/> Some synthesis is apparent, but may be a “lopsided” discussion. <input type="checkbox"/> The essay may rely heavily on paraphrasing. <input type="checkbox"/> References are present and appropriate, but may be limited. <input type="checkbox"/> The writing is organized and straightforward. <input type="checkbox"/> Conventions of language are usually followed, but some errors are evident.
<p>3 The three essay is barely adequate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding of the texts may be partially flawed. <input type="checkbox"/> An attempt at synthesis is evident. <input type="checkbox"/> References to the texts are not clearly connected to a central idea or may be repetitive. <input type="checkbox"/> The response may be somewhat underdeveloped. <input type="checkbox"/> A sense of purpose may be evident, but errors can be distracting.
<p>2 The two essay is inadequate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> While there is an attempt to address the topic, understanding of the texts or the task may be seriously flawed. <input type="checkbox"/> An essay that makes reference to both texts but refers only fleetingly to one of them is inadequate. The response may be seriously underdeveloped. Errors are recurring, distracting, and impede meaning.
<p>1 The one essay is unacceptable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Although the essay mentions both texts, the essay is too brief to address the topic or there may be a complete lack of control in the writing.
<p>0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The zero essay reflects a complete misunderstanding of the texts and/or the task, or is a restatement of the question. Exclusive reference to only one text does not constitute synthesis. Exclusively narrative responses reflect a complete misunderstanding of the task.